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PROGRESS OF THE WORLD

THE tercentenary of the Pilgrims is being appropriately marked with numerous and impressive demonstrations of sympathy between Great Britain and the United States, which have in some quarters been much misunderstood, or misinterpreted, and therefore resented. Despite its high canonical authority, we cannot altogether subscribe to the rule "Love me, love my dog," and we must regret that there are those who cannot or will not recognize the fact that it is possible for a strong spiritual sympathy to exist between two peoples without there being so much as a thought of political relationship. The events of 1620 and 1776 were two of the very greatest in the history of America, and their significance is impregnable. No commemoration of one can impair the purport of the other. Indeed, we must reckon him strangely lacking in acuteness of historical perception who does not understand the vital connection between the two, and see that the coming of the Pilgrims to Plymouth, though unrealized and unintended by them as such, was in fact the first step toward Independence Hall. That fact is perhaps more generally appreciated in Great Britain than in America, and the recognition of it does not in the least degree abate the interest which is felt in this commemoration. It is fitting that Great Britain should gratefully commemorate both 1620 and 1776, as the source of spiritual and political revolutions in her home domain comparable with those in the colonies which she through them lost forever.

France has again finely vindicated her steadfastness of purpose, though in doing so she has incurred another serious and perhaps crucial test. Another of her Presidents has resigned — the fifth to do so — and she has replaced him with one of her best men, without the slightest jar or dis-

turbance of her governmental machinery, and indeed with a facility and a unanimity unprecedented in the history of her elections. With the forebodings of some, that the election of M. Millerand means war, we need not concern ourselves. We do not believe it true; but if it were true, it would mean that war was inevitable in any event, since M. Millerand is unquestionably a faithful exponent of the desires and purposes of the French nation, desires and purposes so strong that no man as President would be able to withstand them. Not peace or war is the test which France must now endure, but rather the question whether she can and will sanction the transformation of her figure-head President into a very active and potent Chief of State. It is an open secret that she made her Presidents mere figure-heads through fear that otherwise someone might attempt a repetition of 1851. The question now to be answered is whether she has outgrown that fear, and can securely and confidently invest her President with some such measures of power — not altogether such — as those of the President of the United States. M. Millerand is an unconcealed advocate of constitutional changes to that end, and he has promptly put some of his theories into practice in advance of legislation. There must presently be a day of reckoning in the Chambers, which will either confirm his course and thus modify the Constitution, or rebuke him in a manner which may cause a governmental crisis. In either case we may expect France to remain tranquil. She has “found herself.”

The League of Nations appears to have performed one of the functions for which it was created, by taking in hand for settlement the controversy over the ownership of the Aland Islands. The exultant boast that it had also secured peace between Poland and Lithuania and would settle their dispute, proved to be premature. In respect to the Aland Islands it will be observed that it undertook precisely the sort of work that the Permanent Tribunal at The Hague was constituted to do, and did repeatedly do years before the League was thought of. We may give the League credit for doing this work, but must recognize two essential circumstances. One is, that the League was not indispensable for this purpose; for had it not been in existence, The Hague Tribunal was there, ready to do the job. The other

is, that in this the League has not fulfilled its highest and primary function, but only a secondary and subsidiary one. Its great function is to prevent war. But there was no serious threat of war in the Aland Islands case. As for other more serious complications, which are causing war and dangers of war, the League does not attempt to deal with them, for the simple reason, frankly stated by Mr. Lloyd George, that it would need troops to do it, and the United States, the only country that could spare troops for the purpose, is not in the League. It would be impossible to express more clearly what would be expected of us if we should ratify the Covenant.

The President has refused to execute a certain supremely important part of the Shipping act. The incident has, of course, figured conspicuously in political and partisan discussion. Entirely apart from party politics and the exigencies of the campaign, it raises the exceedingly important question whether the President is to possess or is to be permitted to exercise the "dispensing power" which was so odious in the Stuart Kings, and which ultimately contributed predominantly to their expulsion. The act was regularly passed by Congress, and was approved and signed by the President. It therefore became as much a part of the law of the land as any other enactment on the statute book. The President is required by the Constitution to see to it that the laws are executed, and he is bound by his oath of office to preserve, protect and defend the Constitution. Perhaps it would promote our "new freedom" to invest the President with the "dispensing power," but in that case some modification of the Constitution would seem to be necessary for the sake of consistency. Either it should provide that the President "shall take care that *such of the laws as he sees fit* be faithfully executed," or it should require him to swear that he will "preserve, protect and defend *such parts of the Constitution as he sees fit.*" We have italicized the proposed interpolations, upon the adoption of which a great and solemn referendum should be taken. It may be added, in a spirit of the purest non-partisanship, that the various explanations, excuses or what not which have been put forward, by the President himself through the State Department, and by his supporters in the press, for justification of his extraordinary act, are the veriest piffle,

which we are certain none of their authors can regard without a smile of derision. The only real question at issue is whether the President is bound by the Constitution and by his oath of office, or is free to exercise the "dispensing power" in respect of them and of all his official duties.

The opening of the college year is marked with a phenomenon of the highest interest, both speculative and practical. This is, the great increase in enrollment, in circumstances which suggest the probability of a yearly continuance of the process, perhaps at an accelerated rate. A statistical review of thirty leading and representative universities, in all parts of the country, shows the following results: From 1905 to 1909 the increase was about 31 per cent; from 1909 to 1914 it was about 34 per cent; in 1917, because of the war, there was a decrease of 17 per cent from 1916; in 1919 there was not only a recovery of that lost 17 per cent but also an increase over 1914 of 47 per cent; and in 1920 there is a very large increase over 1919. It seems reasonable to attribute these last named results to the war, which impressed young men with the value of college training as they had never been impressed before. Years ago, every institution welcomed and indeed solicited all possible increase in attendance. But to-day many of the universities are actually discouraging and repelling it, some by raising the qualifications for admission, and others by arbitrarily limiting the numbers of students to be received. This is because of the embarrassment which too great enrollment causes in one or more of three respects. Some institutions have not housing room—lecture rooms and class rooms—for so many. Some are unable to secure a sufficient number of competent instructors for them. Some with scanty endowments suffer lack of funds with which to care for all who present themselves. These are practical difficulties, which could be overcome with money. In addition there rises if not a difficulty at least a very grave problem of a different kind. That is the question how large a university may properly be, if it is to retain a genuine homogeneity of spirit and culture. A single illustration will show the nature of the problem. New York University in 1919 had, excluding summer school students, by far the largest enrollment in America. Fifteen years ago it was one of the smaller universities, hav-

ing in 1905 a total of only 2,380; in 1909 it had 3,843; in 1914 it had 6,142; and in 1919 it had (without the summer school) 11,237. The question is, can so large and so rapid a growth be satisfactorily assimilated, or must it resemble a too great influx of alien immigrants into the country? Also, will it be possible, even with much time, fully to unify an institution whose students are numbered not by thousands but by tens of thousands? This last is a speculative question, now becoming practical and urgent, which educators are considering carefully, with an earnest hope of being able to work out an affirmative answer.

Efforts to solve the so-called housing problem have been energetically made in many places and in many ways. Most notable of all have been those in New York, where the problem is probably most pressing, and where a special session of the Legislature rushed through a number of more or less radical laws. These were chiefly for the benefit of present tenants, affording little comfort for those who have no satisfactory housing at all, and affording, also, comparatively little encouragement to builders, unless by exempting new dwellings from taxation for a limited time—a device which it would be difficult to justify on sound economic grounds. Of course the only effective solution of the problem is in building more houses and tenements, and in building them in numbers sufficient to cause the question of rent to be normally settled by the law of demand and supply. It is futile and worse than futile to try to provide housing by artificial legislation. Tenants may be protected in their rights, as of course they should be, and landlords should equally be protected in theirs. But you cannot by act of legislature compel men to build houses, and you cannot persuade them to do so unless it is made profitable for them. The scarcity of housing must be recognized as not a detached and isolated phenomenon, but as an integral part of the whole inter-related congeries of conditions and circumstances produced by the war, or perhaps by our economically incompetent and vicious administration of affairs during the war; and we must realize that its adequate and permanent solution will come when—and will not come until—our whole social, industrial and economic system is got back to a normal status.

Irish affairs seem to be sullenly sinking toward nadir. The grewsome and sordid drama of starvation has proceeded at Brixton jail, while from Belfast to Cork has raged a savage tragedy of murder, reprisals, and counter-reprisals; the whole amply warranting the reproach of the worst misgovernment in a century. One sane voice has been heard; that of Lord Grey, proposing a rational and equitable plan of settlement, which former Irish leaders from O'Connell through Parnell to Redmond would have hailed with rapture, and which contemporary Irishmen who place patriotism above politics, like Sir Horace Plunkett, would cordially accept as satisfactory. But the protagonists of the present ruction, from Mr. Eamonn de Valera, on the one hand, to Sir Edward Carson, on the other, reject it with contumely. Meanwhile, Governor Cox and President Wilson have been assuring the American Nation that if only we were in the League of Nations, we should immediately ourselves take a hand in the row by summoning Great Britain before the bar of the Council. Inquired the Second Watch: "How if 'a will not stand?" Responded Dogberry: "Why then take no note of him, but let him go; and presently call the rest of the watch together and thank God you are rid of a knave."

Two years have passed since the Great War was ended by the conclusion of the armistice. We can vividly remember the delirium of exultant joy, and the profound expressions of thanksgiving which marked that time; and especially the fervent and confident declarations that there must be no more war. Yet today there are credibly enumerated no fewer than nine wars actually raging in the world and implicating the belligerent activities of a score of peoples. There are nineteen international frontiers which are held by armed forces in preparation and largely in expectation of war, while four other frontiers are, in a military and belligerent sense, "acutely sensitive." There are also seven civil wars, actual or impending, in as many different countries. That must be admitted to be a poor showing for an era of peace, and to give point to questions concerning the efficiency of the League of Nations, to which most of these belligerents belong. The ready explanation by League advocates is either that the wars are none of its business, or that the League can do nothing without the participation

of the United States. The former is stultifying. If the League has any business at all, it is that of preventing war. The latter seems unmistakably like a confession that the United States, in the League, would be, or would be expected to be, the common bailiff for all the world.

The New York House of Assembly at its special session again expelled three of its five Socialist members, whereupon the other two resigned their seats, regarding so arbitrary a body as unfit for themselves to sit in. The expulsions were indeed, if possible, more arbitrary and despotic than the former ones of last Spring, since they were based on grounds to which the highest authority on the subject in the Assembly, the Chairman of the Judiciary Committee, directly gave the lie. Some Socialists talked foolishly, about "bombs and bullets," but the formal statement put forward by them was if not impeccable at least an immeasurably more creditable performance than the resolution of expulsion. There can be little doubt that the majority of citizens of the State, regardless of party, disapprove and regret the act of the Assembly. They have no use for Socialism, but they detest undemocratic intolerance.

The uselessness of outrage was strikingly displayed in the Wall Street explosion, which was the most destructive crime of the kind on record. Apparently it was not intended to effect the demolition of any specific building, nor the death of any particular person, but simply to do as much miscellaneous damage as possible at the very financial centre of the nation. No building was destroyed or even seriously damaged, but the loss of life was appalling. The irony of it was, however, that not one person was killed who was such as the instigators and doers of the deed might be supposed to have a grudge against and to wish to destroy. Every one of the nearly two-score belonged to the wage-earning category, in whose behalf bomb-throwers pretend to act. As for the "moral effect" of it, it was confined to making more general and more intense the detestation of all such deeds.

Unpleasant reports come, of the most circumstantial and positive character, from the highest authorities, of the increasing and increasingly flagrant disregard of the pro-

hibition law. One expert and authoritative observer recently declared that in New Jersey there were more drunken women and children than ever before. That was because of the home manufacture of beer containing eight or nine per cent of alcohol, instead of the three or four per cent formerly produced by breweries. In all large cities there are stores on almost every street, if not on every block, for the sale of hops, malt and other ingredients and mechanical appliances for the home manufacture of beer, with full directions for their use. The sale of copper and other tubing, of a size suitable for the making of small stills for household use, has enormously increased. Of course the making of crude beverages in private homes, of excessive alcoholic strength, and the drinking of them in a raw, unseasoned state, must be far more pernicious than was the former liquor traffic which these semi-sur-reptitious devices and practices have supplanted. In many places the state of affairs is an open scandal, revolting alike to sincere and thoughtful "wets" and "drys." The physical results of such tipping are deplorable. The moral effects, in inculcating contempt for law, are atrocious.

Revelations, or at any rate most explicit and circumstantial charges, have been made concerning the conduct of the American Government toward Haiti which, if not completely refuted, must involve us in grave discredit. They are to the effect that, in order to facilitate the exploitation of the island Republic by a favored American bank, we have taken advantage of if we have not actually fomented and executed revolutions there, have abrogated the Haitian Constitution and have imposed a new one upon the Republic, and have practically massacred some thousands of the people. These charges are strongly supported by attendant circumstances, and they have not yet been satisfactorily disproved or even denied.